



This brother faces jail Earl Caldwell at Resurrection City, May, 1968.

On Feb. 2, Earl Caldwell, a black reporter for the New York Times, was subpoenaed and ordered to bring his notes and tape recordings accumulated over a 13-month period and appear before a Federal Grand Jury in California — The jury is investigating the Black Panther Party.

We the undersigned, think that subpoena raised grave issues affecting all of us and we would like to make our position clear in the black community:

1. Earl Caldwell was subpoenaed as an individual — that New York Times was not subpoenaed. Let us be clear about that, no matter what you may read elsewhere.
2. It is Earl Caldwell who faces penalties that include jail if he refuses to comply with the subpoena.
3. We feel he was subpoenaed because it was felt that, as a black man, he had special access to information in the black community. Thus the role of every black news man and woman has been put into question — Are we government agents? Will we reveal confidential sources if subpoenaed? Can our employers turn over our files, notes or tapes if we object?

Because several major newsgathering organizations did, in fact, turn over their files to investigating agencies before Earl Caldwell was sub-

poenaed, it is of the utmost importance that our position as black men and women in the news business be reaffirmed to the black community. We do not intend to be used as spies, informers or undercover agents by anybody — period! We will protect our confidential sources, using every means at our disposal.

Black Perspective, the organization of black journalists, has, with the assistance of the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., provided Earl Caldwell with his own attorney who will seek to protect his rights and interests quite apart from what the New York Times may choose to do. Black Perspective came into being more than two years ago to deal with the concerns of black newsmen and women. Many of us belong to other organizations of newsmen and women, but the case of Earl Caldwell proves — if proof were needed — that a Black Perspective should exist. A week after Earl Caldwell had been served with a subpoena, the American Newspaper Guild, to which Timesman Caldwell monthly pays his dues, had uttered no word in his behalf nor had it offered to provide him with counsel. Sigma Delta Chi, the journalism society, had neither spoken out for reporter Caldwell nor offered him aid. Though the rights and future of all journalists were at stake, "the brother" was on his own.

The black journalist is different — he is black. Many will, in all probability, cover the black community for the rest of their careers.

The urban story is the "big" story: The urban story is, to a great extent, the black story. The black reporter will most certainly be assigned to cover black communities when they become physically dangerous for white reporters.

He will assign himself to cover the black community out of a sense of responsibility to bring about a greater understanding and clarity of the dynamics and nuances of the black revolution. This is frequently the black reporter's reaction to the lack of real understanding in too many of the media's stories about black people.

Any appearance of a police-newsman "deal" would adversely affect the reporter's credibility in the total community. Any appearance of such a "deal" between police and black journalists kills the credibility and trust black reporters have built up over the years.

Some white reporters face similar situations. But, from our perspective, black and white reporters are not interchangeable.

For one thing, when the black reporter leaves the office to cover a black story he goes home. Home is the black community.

We are not the white world's spies in the black community nor will we be used as such. We are not undercover agents for local, state and Federal law enforcement agencies, nor will we be used as such.

We are not spokesmen for the black community. As black journalists we are attempting to interpret, with as great an understanding and truth as is possible, the nation's social revolutions.

Leandra Abbott, Journalist
Leroy Aiken, New York Times
Simon Obi Anekwe, Amsterdam News
William Artis, Buffalo Evening News
Ed Bagwell, News Voice International
Peter Bailey, Ebony Magazine
George Barner, Community News Service
Tony Batten, NET-TV, Black Journal
Ed Bradley, WCBS Radio
St. Clair Bourne, NET-TV
Barbara Campbell, New York Times
Lester Carson, Associated Press
Don Hogan Charles, New York Times
Charles Childs, Life Magazine
Roger Clendening, New York Times
Al Curry, New York Times
George Davis, New York Times

Ernest Dunbar, Look Magazine
Steve Duncan, New York Daily News
Donald Franklin, St. Louis Post-Dispatch
C. Gerald Fraser, New York Times
Phyl Garland, Ebony Magazine
Marcia Gillespie, Time-Life Books
George Goodman, Look Magazine
William Greaves, NET
Charles Harris, Random House
Al Harvin, New York Times
Paul Hathaway, Time Magazine
Nancy Hicks, New York Times
Charles Hobson, WABC-TV, "Like It Is"
Ernest Holsendolph, Fortune Magazine
Charlayne Hunter, New York Times
Jane Tillman Irving, Community News Service
Rudy Johnson, New York Times

Thomas A. Johnson, New York Times
Ernest Johnston Jr., New York Post
Marquita Jones, WABC-TV
Kay Lindsey, WBAI Radio
Claude Lewis, Philadelphia Bulletin
Esperanza Martinez, WABC-TV
Les Matthews, Amsterdam News
Louise Meriwether, Writer
Gil Moore, Freelance Journalist
Keith Moore, New York Daily News
Gil Noble, WABC-TV
Gordon Parks, Photographer-Writer
David Parks, Photographer
Gordon Parks Jr. Photographer
Pat Paterson, New York Courier
Ted Poston, New York Post
Betty Granger Reid, Amsterdam News
Rufus Rivers, New York Times

Ruth N. Ross, Essence Magazine
Gil Scott, Associated Press
Stan Scott, WINS Radio
John Shearer, Photographer
Jacob Simms, Time Magazine
Gene Simpson, WCBS-TV
John Singleton, New York Daily News
Ronald Smothers, Community News Service
Melvin Tapley, Amsterdam News
Bob Teague, WNBC-TV
Charles Thomas, WNEW-TV
Cordell S. Thompson, Jet Magazine
Jesse Walker, Amsterdam News
Elsie Washington, Life Magazine
Mel Watkins, New York Times
Vern West, ABC-TV
Hugh Wyatt, New York Daily News
Sheila Younge, Journalist

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Message to the Black Community . . . From Black Journalists

We will not be used as spies, informants or undercover agents by anybody.

We will protect our confidential sources, using every means at our disposal.

We strongly object to attempts by law enforcement agencies to exploit our blackness.